JOSEPH STACY MURDOCK



Joseph S. Murdock, first bishop in Heber, lived a most interesting and active life. He was born June 26, 1822, at Hamilton, Madison County, New York, and it was here that his father's family embraced Mormonism in 1836.

Some time after this the family started for the body of the Church, which at that time was located at Nauvoo, Illinois. By this time young Murdock was about 20 years of age. Before starting out with his father and other members of the family, he concluded he would marry. Miss Eunice Sweet was a noble young lady, who also believed in the new religion, and he proposed to her and they were married just prior to starting on their journey for Nauvoo, where they arrived in 1842, and met the Prophet Joseph Smith. Old father Murdock turned all his property over to the Church and in return received his "inheritance in Zion," under the direction of the prophet.

Young Murdock became well acquainted with Joseph and Hyrum, often sitting under their teachings.

On March 21, 1843, he received his patriarchal blessing under the hands of Hyrum Smith. Among other things he was promised that he should have a numerous posterity, a very peculiar promise, since the young man had been married a number of years and his wife had, as yet, borne

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no children. In 1843 the young man was ordained a Seventy under the direction of the Prophet Joseph.

At the expulsion of the saints from Nauvoo, he, with his wife, mother, sister and two brothers, started for the Rocky Mountains, the father having died previous to the expulsion from the city. While the body of the Church was on the banks of the Missouri River, word came for 500 able-bodied men to go and fight the nation's battles with Mexico. Like a true patriot, Mr. Murdock turned his charge over to the care of one of his younger brothers, a mere lad, and volunteered his services to the country. Being an excellent hand with cattle, however, he was excused from military life and placed in charge of the cattle of those who joined the Mormon Battalion. He continued the journey across the plains, arriving in Salt Lake Valley on September 22, 1847, when the new home of the saints was less than two months old.

In 1849 he was called by President Brigham Young to go back to Green River and assist the saints who were coming to Zion. The year 1852 came, and still Mr. Murdock was childless. But in the fall of 1852 the young man took a second wife. His wife Eunice gave her husband the hand of Miss Eliza Clark, by whom he had two children. He married again, this time taking two wives, Jane Sharp and Elizabeth Hunter, and in 1858 he married Pernetta Murdock, an Indian girl.

In 1856, President Young called him to take his family and assist in settling Carson Valley. When word reached President Young, in 1857, that Johnston's army was on its way to Utah, the Carson Valley settlers were called back to Salt Lake City. In the fall of that year he took his family and located in American Fork.

On November 15, 1860, he was ordained a bishop under the hands of Brigham Young and sent to preside over the people who were locating Wasatch County, and, therefore, was first bishop of Heber. While acting in that capacity he served one term as representative of the county in the territorial legislature. In 1867 he, with others, was called to settle St. Joe, on the Muddy Nevada. He remained there three years, when he was released by President Young to return home to Provo Valley. While on his way home he secured a contract from the government for carrying the mail from Provo to Echo, via Provo Canyon, and continued in this business for a number of years. He was a pioneer in every sense of the word, always engaged in building up new country and making peace with the Indians. He had a magnetic influence over the redmen, who would always listen to him.

In 1889 he was arraigned before Judge Blackburn at Provo for infringement of the Edmunds-Tucker law. His first wife had died years before, and he was advised to marry one of his plural wives and repudiate the others. He was a firm believer in the principle of "plural marriage," and obeyed the principle feeling from the depths of his heart it was of God, and no man could persuade him to repudiate any of his wives. They had been true to him, and he could not go back on the sacred promises he made with them in the days of their youth. He was sentenced to a term of one month in the territorial penitentiary for unlawful cohabitation. The aged gentleman by this time had fully convinced the judge of his honesty. Committal papers were handed him and he was allowed to go from the courtroom unattended by guard. He went back home to visit his family, then went down to Salt Lake and presented his own committal papers at the penitentiary, was taken in, and served out his sentence of one month.

In the days of the Black Hawk troubles, Mr. Murdock took a leading hand in settling the Indian uprisings of those days. When Wasatch Stake was organized he was made president of the High Council, which position he held at the time of his death. He always manifested implicit confidence in Mormonism, even to the hour of his death. He was the husband of five wives, the father of 32 children, and he had 137 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, a total posterity of 175, so he lived to see the words of Patriarch Hyrum Smith fulfilled to the very letter.

ELIZABETH HUNTER MURDOCK

Elizabeth Hunter Murdock, wife of Joseph Stacy Murdock was born on April 17, 1839, in Clarkmman, Clackmmanshire, Scot-



land, the third daughter of Robert and Agnes Hunter. The parents enjoyed a happy life, except for a difference in their religious views. When the Mormon missionaries preached the gospel to Agnes, she acepted it, but was rejected by her family, particularly two brothers who were Methodist ministers. This viewpoint on the part of the brothers intrigued Robert, and he investigated the Church and joined, uniting the family religiously.

Desiring to come to Zion, the Hunter family began saving and planning. Agnes and her children came first, leaving Robert behind to dispose of the home and store. They sailed on September 4, 1850, from Liverpool, traveling to New Orleans, and from there to St. Louis. They settled in a little mining town of Gravies to wait for their husband and father. But within a year, Agnes died, leaving the four children, ages 16 to 6, all alone. Their uncle, Adam Hunter, soon arrived from Scotland, only to bring word of the illness and death of the father. One of the girls went to Utah with her Uncle Adam, and the others later came with David Love, who married the oldest of the girls. During the trip across the plains, Elizabeth had to watch over her little brother, Jimmy, and care for the family cow. She walked the entire distance to Utah barefoot. They arrived in Salt Lake on August 15, 1852.

Elizabeth found work in a number of the homes of the saints, and also renewed a friendship with a girl friend from Scotland, Jane Sharp. She and Jane were married to Joseph Murdock on June 11, 1854. With her husband and his wives, Jane went to Carson, Nevada, on a colonizing mission for the Church, and then, with the threat of Johnston's army in Utah, they returned the next year and settled in American Fork. The families prospered here for four years, and in 1860 Elizabeth went with her husband to Heber, where he was called as bishop. They later went to southern Nevada on what was called the "muddy mission," to help settle Dixie and start raising cotton.

Elizabeth and her family had a difficult time in the "Muddy" area. The land was hard and untillable, and the food was coarse and tasteless. They thought they were in Utah, but when it was learned the land was in Nevada, and when Arizona also tried to claim the land, the settlers were instructed by President Brigham Young to settle elsewhere. Elizabeth returned to Heber, where she lived among family and friends for the rest of her life. She was always active in the Church, and the Relief Society was her special joy. She served in every ward capacity and was in the presidency of the Stake Relief Society, traveling by carriage and buggy to visit all the wards.

At 75, Elizabeth broke her leg and the doctors told her she would never walk again, but she mustered up determination and, with the help of a crutch, was able to walk everywhere. Her love of cooking and of books kept her busy throughout her life. In her declining years she sold her home and built an apartment on the side of her daughter Anne's home, where she happily lived until her ninety-sixth year, dying at home on June 11, 1935.

JANE SHARP MURDOCK

In Scotland "a wee bonnie lassie," Jane Sharp was born to Nathaniel and Cecelia Sharp on April 13, 1838, in a small town called Sterling.

The father worked in the mines. The miners lived in apartments furnished by the mine owners. The Sharp family and the Hunter family lived across the hall from each other and Jane Sharp and Elizabeth Hunter became fast friends. This friendship lasted all the days of their lives.

After some years, Nathaniel Sharp contracted miner's consumption and passed away after a long and painful illness, leaving his wife and children alone. She later married Gibson Condie. The Hunter family and the Cecelia Sharp Condie family left their native land to come to Zion after ac-

cepting the gospel. They endured many hardships and settled in the barren valley of Great Salt Lake.

Brigham Young was at that time managing what was called the Church pastures, which had been moved from Davis County to Salt Lake County.

Joseph Stacy Murdock, a great friend and admirer of Brigham Young, arrived in Salt Lake Valley on September 22, 1847, and was given employment at the Church pastures and dairy farm.

At this time polygamy was being practiced among the Latter-day Saints, so Jane Sharp and Elizabeth Hunter became the wives of Joseph Stacy Murdock on June 11, 1854. Jane Sharp Murdock was the mother of nine fine children, six boys and three girls. She lived most of her life in Heber City. Jane Murdock had a loom and spent many an hour weaving carpets, sewing rug rags and coloring them to make the carpets prettier.

She knitted socks and gloves for her family of boys, sewing everything by hand. She also found time to help with the poor and assisted in the Relief Society whenever help was needed. Jane traveled much to carry cookies, bread, jelly or some tasty bite to old folks or the sick or as birthday surprises. Jane spent many nights helping to care for the sick or little children, or to baby-sit, for free, to help a tired mother.

She loved to go to meetings, parties or anywhere to visit or have a little recreation. She usually had good health.

The children of Joseph Stacy and Jane Sharp were: David Nathaniel, Nymphus Hyrum, Willard Milton, William Henry, Stanley Gibson, Margaret Ellen, Sarah Jane and Royal Stacy. Cecilia died as a child.

ELIZA CLARK MURDOCK

Eliza Clark Murdock, wife of Joseph Stacy Murdock, was born May 17, 1830, in Herefordshire, England, daughter of Thomas Henry and Charlotte Gailey Clark. Her father, a farmer, had a large family, and all had to work hard.

Thomas Clark, her father, was an elder in the Church of the United Brethren, but when Wilford Woodruff spoke to the group as a body, the congregation joined the LDS Church. The Clark family later emigrated to America, traveling six weeks on a sailing vessel and then going to Nauvoo. As a girl, Eliza remembered selling eggs at the Mansion House for three cents a dozen.

From Nauvoo, Eliza's father was called to fill a mission in England, and on his return the family moved to Utah, settling in Grantsville. It was here that Eliza met Joseph S. Murdock, who already had one wife, Eunice. Eliza was married on June 2, 1852, in the Salt Lake Endowment House. She proved to be a good wife, caring for her family and in her quiet way always backing up the things her husband needed to do.

She desired to have money of her own, and always kept a few head of cattle and some sheep, which she would sell in the fall. At April and October conferences she always had some money for her husband to attend the meetings in Salt Lake.

She died on April 4, 1898. As she lay in state, her husband said to two of her granddaughters: "Girls, I wish you could be like your grandmother. She was mild and gentle, never once in our married life doing anything to cause me trouble. We were a big family, but she always did as I asked her, and was a good woman."

To the members of the family this was a fitting summation and tribute to her life.

PERNETTA (NETTIE) MURDOCK

Pernetta Murdock, youngest wife of Joseph Stacy Murdock, came first to the Murdock home as a baby to be reared by Eunice, and by a strange turn of circumstances became one of his five wives.

The girl, an Indian, had been stolen by other Indians in a raid, and then discovered by Porter Rockwell, who purchased the girl and also a boy from the Indians to save their lives. Rockwell approached Murdock about taking the two youngsters, and since his first wife, Eunice, had borne no children, Murdock agreed to take the children for her to rear, giving Porter Rockwell two yoke of oxen for them.

Eunice took the youngsters to her heart, and particularly was fond of the girl, giving her every advantage of education and training. The exact time of her birth is not known, but it is assumed to be about 1842. The girl was taught to be a splendid housekeeper and excellent cook. As she grew to young womanhood she caught the eye of an unscrupulous man, and he persisted in his attention to her. Joseph S. Murdock worried that the man would entice the girl away and then abandon her, so he went to Salt Lake and presented the problem to President Brigham Young. He received a startling answer when President Young told him that he should marry the girl himself. He resisted, indicating she was like a daughter to him, but President Young blessed him and said it was the thing to do. The turn of events caused some difficulty at home, but with faith and prayer they made plans for the marriage, which was performed June 25, 1859, in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. The other wives welcomed her into the family relationship and treated her very kindly. Before her husband's death she bore him five children, one of whom died in infancy.

Nettie, as she was known, traveled with her husband to the "Muddy Mission," and also to Heber and the mission call in Dixie. She returned to Heber to rear her children and was always very proud of them. She was a thrifty woman, and would earn extra money by washing, cleaning or helping others. She also earned a little extra money from the sale of hops. She was an excellent cook, and many remember her particularly for her groundcherry pies.

Nettie died in November, 1887, a very young woman. She was known to have lived a good life, though a very hard one. Those in the family agree that had she lived she could have been proud of her children and her many grandchildren.

JAMES STACY MURDOCK

James Stacy Murdock, son of Joseph Stacy and Elizabeth Hunter Murdock, was born December 8, 1861, at American Fork, Utah. His parents moved the family to Heber, Wasatch County, Utah, in 1862, where he lived a full life.

As a young man, he and his brother, Alva M., built and managed the first livery stable in Heber. They operated a freight line between Heber and the Uintah Basin



and carried the U. S. mail between Heber and Park City, Utah.

James always was a man of industry and foresight, an ardent sportsman and a builder for his community, as well as for himself. He was known throughout the West as one of its most prominent stockmen and woolgrowers. Many people were employed in his various interests. He was civic-minded to the extent that at times he bore the expense of promoting issues he believed to be for the public good. The retaining of the Heber Light & Power Company for the community, being an example. The people of the city were about to sell the plant to the Utah Light & Power Company when he and his life-long friend, James W. Clyde, hired an electrical engineer to prove to the community what a valuable asset they possessed. The company is still owned by the city.

James played baseball, hunted and fished as hobbies, and being an ardent lover of horses, he bred and raced standard-bred horses for a time.

He held many public offices during his lifetime. He was elected sheriff in 1891, serving eight years. From 1893 to 1901 he held the position of County Fish and Game Commissioner. He was a director of the Bank of Heber City many years.

He married Dora Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas and Johanna Kirstine Nicol, on February 23, 1882, in the Salt Lake Endowment House. To this couple two sons and six daughters were born: Mrs. Charles E. (Josephine) Bronson, Alva Pierce, Curtis Thomas, Mrs. Thomas (Criss) Jones, Mrs. Lester D. (May) Greenwood, Mrs. Andrew J. (Hope) Mohr, Mrs. Durrel T. (Clara) Burningham, and Mrs. Eldon (Beth) Ritchie.

During the later part of her life, Dora